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latinity of diction than it does; for this property is essential to the *keeping* of the dialogue, and is peculiarly efficacious in giving it an air of perfect reality and truth.

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2.—1. *Anniversary Address on the Progress of the Natural Sciences in the United States; delivered before the Lyceum of Natural History of New York, February*, 1826. By James E. De Kay. New York. G. & C. Carvill. 8vo. pp. 78.

2. *Report of a Committee of the Trustees of the Boston Athenæum, made to the Proprietors, May* 25, 1826.

The principal object of this Address is thus stated by the author.

'On the present occasion it is proposed to give a brief outline of the progress and present state of the Natural Sciences in the United States. Such occasional exhibitions are something more than mere appeals to national vanity. They are consonant with the usages of other nations, and if faithfully executed, are not always flattering to national pride. They become useful records of the labors of our contemporaries, may indicate sources of information, which might be overlooked by the inquirer, and often serve as an incitement to greater exertion with the rising generation.' p. 6.

Of the usefulness of such undertakings there can be no question; and the one before us seems to be executed with care and correctness. The votaries of Natural Science will be gratified to perceive how much has been done by Americans, in this department, during the last eight or ten years, compared with any former period. The amount, indeed, is not great in itself, but it gives promise of more; for men seldom stop, who have once entered on this career. The natural curiosity of man is sharpened, and his intellectual activity increased, by every new attainment in these pursuits. In science we can never reach a height, from which another more commanding cannot be observed; we are drawn on from step to step, the prospect is continually expanding, and our appetite for knowledge 'doth make the meat it feeds on.' Among the sources of happiness, the pursuit of science holds one of the first places; since the principal employment of those engaged in it, is the successful invention of new pleasures. We are rejoiced, then, at everything that may turn the attention of our countrymen towards this occupation, which will continually present worthy objects for that activity, which is too often wasted in useless or hurtful undertakings.

It appears from Dr De Kay's Address, that very little was done in the science of Mineralogy before Professor Cleaveland published his Elementary Treatise in 1816; since then, several smaller works have been published, especially local catalogues of minerals, such as those of Webster, Hale, and Robinson; and, in the words of the Address,

'Mineralogy has now become a popular branch of science; lectures are delivered in every considerable town in the Union; and extensive cabinets of minerals are to be met with in every direction. Increased attention has been paid to the composition of minerals, and several of our countrymen, with a view of perfecting themselves in this delicate branch, have enrolled themselves in the School of Mines at Paris. Many new mineral species have been firmly established, and others, which were doubtful, have been reexamined, and restored to their proper places in the system.' pp. 11, 12.

The progress of Geology has been still more striking.

'Previous to the year 1812,' says the Address, 'the published notices on our geology were few and unimportant; and little more was known, in a geological point of view, of the United States, than that they extended along the coast of the Atlantic, and were bounded on the north by a chain of mighty lakes. Mr Maclure, a gentleman peculiarly qualified for such a task by a familiar acquaintance with the most interesting formations of Europe, commenced a personal examination of this country, which he traversed in various directions. The result of his labors was given to the public in 1817, under the title of "Observations on the Geology of the United States." This is a bold outline, sketched by a masterly hand, and replete with the most valuable and interesting information.

'The geologists of Europe, who had been chiefly occupied with their theories and speculations, and from the phenomena of a mole hill had not unfrequently deduced principles on which depended the formation of a world, were struck with the simple, yet grand features, presented by this geological map of America.' pp. 15, 16.

The publication of Mr Maclure's observations has been followed by numerous others on the geology of separate districts, of which a particular account is given in this Address, and which are probably only the forerunners of more extensive and important geological investigations.

The science of Botany has fared better in this country than the sister sciences. It has been longer an object of attention, which, for obvious reasons, has been more general. Beside the larger works on this subject, we have numerous local Floras, and new ones are frequently appearing. There is still, however, according to Dr De Kay, a deficiency of good elementary works. As an evidence of the increasing attention to this science it is stated, that 'four successive editions of Eaton's Manual of Botany have been published during the last four years.' The attention of American botanists, however, has been directed principally to the phenogamous plants. The department of the cryptogamia, though highly interesting, has been comparatively neglected.

Of all the natural sciences, however, the most interesting, and, as it appears to us, by far the most important, is Zoology, or the history of animals, man included. This has received less attention than any of the others in the United States. As we have been accused of borrowing our learning from Great Britain, so we might be accused in this instance of following the example of her ignorance; for it is but lately that this science has received in that country the attention which it deserved. Few works on either of the numerous departments of this extensive science have been published in this country.

One of the great obstacles to the advancement of the sciences in this country, is the want of books, cabinets, and scientific apparatus in general. In a note to this Address, the number of books in the principal cities of the United States is thus stated.

'New York, with a population of 170,000, possesses ten public libraries, containing 44,000 volumes; Baltimore, with a population of 70,000, has four public libraries, containing 30,000 volumes; Philadelphia, with a population of 160,000, possesses nineteen public libraries, containing 70,000 volumes; Boston, with a population of 60,000, possesses thirteen public libraries, containing 55,000 volumes.' *Appendix*, p. 74.

But we hope that this deficiency will ere long be supplied. Great exertions are now making in Boston to procure an ample scientific library; and cabinets of minerals are becoming more common and extensive, throughout the United States. An attempt is now making in this vicinity to establish a museum of comparative anatomy, and we doubt not that it will meet with the success which it deserves.

Among those institutions, which seem to promise most for the diffusion of scientific knowledge, we may take this occasion to mention the Boston Athenæum.

This institution, one of the earliest of the kind in the United States, by the assistance of munificent individuals, and a judicious union with certain establishments before existing, now bids fair to become the most important.* When the arrangements proposed by the Committee, the title of whose Report stands at the head of this article, are completed, the library of the Athenæum will be richer in scientific books than any other in America; and will supply a deficiency, which has long been deeply felt by the lovers of science among us. An union has been effected with the Medical Library, and with the Scientific Association. The Medical Library contained more than two thousand volumes of well selected modern works on medicine, surgery, and chemistry, purchased within ten years, at an expense of more than four thousand five hundred dollars. This library now forms a part of the Athenæum. The proprietors of the Medical Library, being thirtyone in number, were entitled to life rights in the Athenæum, with the privilege of exchanging such life rights for full shares, by paying each an additional sum of one hundred and fifty dollars; thirty of these proprietors have taken shares in the Athenæum, paying in all, the sum of four thousand five hundred dollars; so that the property of the Athenæum is increased more than nine thousand dollars by this union.

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* This relative importance, even before the remarkable increase set forth in the Report, might be said to belong to the Boston Athenæum; especially since the

The Scientific Association, formed a few months since, for the purpose of procuring a collection of scientific books, have obtained a subscription of three thousand seven hundred and fifteen dollars, of which above three thousand dollars has already been collected. An agreement for an union with this association, having been made by the committee, was approved by the proprietors of the Athenæum, at their meeting on the twentyfifth of May, 1826; and the whole amount subscribed will be appropriated for the purchase of the scientific books, contained in a catalogue prepared by the trustees of the Scientific Association, which catalogue does not contain any books now in the Athenæum. This department of the library will also be rendered much more complete by a sum subscribed in February, 1826, for procuring entire sets of the Transactions of the Royal Societies and Academies of Sciences in London, Edinburgh, Dublin, Paris, Petersburg, Berlin, Turin, Göttingen, Stockholm, Copenhagen, Madrid, and Lisbon.

The means taken by the Committee to supply the deficiencies in the library will best be seen by the following extract from their Report, which we cite as an example worthy of imitation in other communities, and likely to exert an important influence on the literature and science of the country.

'Having ascertained the deficiencies in the library to be great, they were considering the expediency of a general sub-

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noble donation, amounting at the least to twenty thousand dollars, made a few years ago by the late James Perkins, Esq. the brother of one, and the father of the other of the gentlemen mentioned in the Report.

scription among the proprietors to supply the same, when Colonel Thomas H. Perkins, by a letter of March 30, 1826, munificently offered to give eight thousand dollars towards the completion of the new lecture rooms, provided the like sum should be subscribed, by other friends of the Athenæum, before the first day of November next; and James Perkins, Esq. by a letter of the same date, and in the same munificent spirit, made a similar offer, on similar conditions. Whereupon your committee, in pursuance of their instructions, did, on the tenth of April, lay the whole subject before the trustees, who, after voting the thanks of their board to Colonel Thomas H. Perkins and James Perkins, Esq. authorized and requested your committee forthwith to collect, in any way they might see fit, the sums necessary to secure to this institution the full benefit of the offer of the Messrs Perkins. The committee, accordingly, proceeded to obtain subscriptions, and did obtain them to the following amounts; viz.

Donations	$10,090
Amount paid by the proprietors of the Medical Library, to obtain full shares in the Athenæum	4,500
Fifteen new shares in the Athenæum, being all the shares which remain unsold	4,500
	$19,090
Donation of Col. Thomas H. Perkins	8,000
Donation of James Perkins, Esq.	8,000
Subscription for the Transactions of London, Paris, &c. of which sum Colonel Perkins subscribed five hundred dollars, and James Perkins, Esq. five hundred dollars	1,700
Scientific Association (at least)	3,210
Amount in cash or approved securities	$40,000
To this add the value of the books of the Medical Library	4,500
Making the gross sum of	$44,500

‘ Being the amount of property added to the Athenæum since January last.

‘ Having obtained this large and generous subscription, your committee proceeded to make arrangements for supplying the deficiency in the Athenæum Library, according to the vote of the proprietors. They have prepared lists of books, which will be purchased as soon as may be, and they have made arrangements for completing the broken sets now in the Athenæum, and for binding the unbound books now on the shelves. Of the forty thousand dollars, therefore, which have been received, the following appropriations are already made; viz.

To the Lecture Rooms, Col. Perkins's donation .	$8,000
Catalogue prepared by the Trustees of the Scientific Association	3,210
Catalogue prepared by the Trustees of the Athenæum (about)	10,790
For binding and repairs	1,500
Making in all	$23,500

'Leaving the sum of sixteen thousand five hundred dollars to be added to the permanent funds of the institution, the income of which is to be appropriated to the purchase of books hereafter. But this is not the only, or the principal new source of income, that will be opened to the Athenæum, for the purchase of books, which may be estimated as follows; viz.

Income from new fund (about)	$900
from lecture rooms (about)	800
from circulation of books	900
from annual Scientific subscribers . . .	200
Making the whole annual income	$2,800

according to an extremely moderate computation, for the purchase of books; the income from the former funds of the institution having been found sufficient to pay the current expenses.'

Such a report requires few comments. It affords a cheering prospect, and the best evidence that the mantle of the fathers of New England still rests upon their children; that the spirit, which first reared her metropolis, is undiminished; and that, if the operation of natural causes has lessened her comparative political importance in the Union, she has no disposition to be left behind in the race of improvement, wherever a way remains open. In one particular department, that of popular lectures, she has, indeed, suffered a sister city to outstrip her for a short period; but she has only paused to gather strength, and will appear again on the arena with renewed vigor. Not to pursue the metaphor farther, it is obvious, that without a scientific library, the advantage of lectures must be comparatively slight. Lectures are, after all, merely a channel for the diffusion of scientific knowledge, the communication of scientific results in a condensed and popular form, and an instrument for exciting in the public a taste for this sort of information. The two first purposes cannot be answered, to any considerable extent, without easy access to the labors of the learned in other parts of the world; and every lover of science in this country, at least in this neighborhood, has had occasion to know and lament the obstacles, which have hitherto obstructed such access; and as to a taste for science, it is scarcely necessary to excite what cannot be gratified.

In short, we consider the proposed improvement in the Boston Athenæum as making an important era in the history of this city; and we trust, that the friends of learning in other parts of the United States will forgive their brethren here, if, in their rejoicing on this occasion, they should be betrayed into something like an appearance of self applause; if they express a hope of being able to acquire, what it is honorable even to strive for, preeminence in all good literature and science. May such preeminence never be undisputed. We would that success should be eagerly contested, not in words only, but deeds; we would not that this city should be great, because others are small; the best we can wish it, is to be *prima inter pares*, the most active and the most deserving among many worthy competitors.

In the statement of the number of books in Boston as quoted above from Dr De Kay's Address, the library of the University in this vicinity was, of course, not taken into the account. This valuable collection has been silently increasing for many years, and few, perhaps even in its immediate neighborhood, are aware of its present importance. In one department, that of American history, it has become, by the addition of the Ebeling and Warden collections, one of the richest in the world. We hope to be able, at some future time, to give a particular and elaborate account of the treasures contained in this noble collection, and of the sources from which they have been principally derived. We must content ourselves on this occasion with the expression of our hope, that in the present zeal for the general improvement of the University, this most important department will obtain its full share of attention.

A considerable part of Dr De Kay's Address is devoted to the consideration of the various expeditions for topographical and scientific purposes, under the direction of the general government. Small as these beginnings have been, they have done much for the advancement of science; and it is to be hoped, that they will be continued, and upon a more liberal scale. The Address has been evidently prepared with much industry, and does great credit to the author's regard for the sciences of which he treats.

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